

Not Too High.

BY C. H. BALSBAUGH.

Believers are greatly divided in their recognition of the truth because they greatly differ in their relation to the truth. The purely intellectual or logical attitude is not the saving position. It is an antecedent and a concomitant, but it is not the faculty by which eternal life is apprehended and appropriated. By the mind we credit the divine testimony as worthy of acceptance, while with the heart we identify ourselves with it. The faith on which the Bible insists is a much deeper, more radical and all-inclusive energy and exercise than is generally supposed. We may logically believe every word contained in the holy oracles, and yet not believe a syllable in the divine sense. To believe is to live by, and this means no less than to live as God lives, with the same purity, righteousness, love, peace, and purpose. To believe or by-live, is to be born of God, to be impregnated by His spirit, to possess and manifest His perfection and beauty. This was the divine intent in creating man in His own image, and in the first promise of redemption, and pre-eminently in His incarnation in which all promises and threats and types were absolved. This world is not an isolated planet, nor man an isolated being. The universe is an organic whole, and man has relation so vast that nothing can reveal and fill them but God incarnate. This brings out our true position, dignity, and significance, and shames the present low, dismembered, jarring, warring, carnal, cross-shunning, prick-kicking, condition of the church. There is a great deal of cross-bearing among believers which is solely of their own making. They bear burdens for no high end and to no grand outcome for themselves or others. In the cross of Christ self goes down first of all, and comes up again divinely incarnated, one with God from center to periphery, leaving neither toe nor finger nor shoe-latchet to Pharaoh. The agreement between God and His co-eternal fellow, for the purchase of man with divine-human blood was one that took the whole Christ, and included the whole man, so that Emmanuel was the absolute all of both. Christ was Christ when he eat and drank and slept and dressed and undressed, no less than when he prayed and taught and bled and died and wrought miracles. Jesus combed his hair and put on and off his shoes as Emmanuel, no less than he now executes the functions of Mediator at the right hand of the Majesty on high. To be Christ and to be a Christian is in the simplest, most natural, and absolute sense to live: not now and then, in this and that, but to live. Some protest against such a view as too lofty and impracticable. But the high calling of God is just as high as Himself. Bible-alone Christians will never need proof-texts for corroboration. How high Christ is we know, if we know any of Him intelligently and savingly; and that we are to share His throne and glory is the standing theme of revelation. He became a man and yet remained God, and thus forever settles the question of Christian possibility and obligation. To be God-born is to be God-helped, God-possessed, God-developed, God-perfected. Most professors have low attainments because their conceptions and aims are low; and very many neither seek nor desire any higher God manifest in the flesh:—this is the ideal. It is high indeed but it reveals our capacities, the grand, eternal involutions of our being, and God's goodness in giving us something vast and glorious enough to fill them and develop them in endless beatitude and progression. Instead of murmuring and stumbling at the altitude of our vocation, as so many do, it is reason for profoundest adoration that God is the Alpha and Omega and complement of our being. The way most avowed believers live indicates their sad misapprehension of God and themselves, and their high-calling in the God-man. If God had no greater salvation, and no higher, brighter Heaven than the majority conceive, we would all shrivel with ennui in the upper world. Thousands of the gigantic intellects of christendom exhaust their wits in chipping down the majesty and completeness of the divine Incarnation, so as to have a little, oftener much, liberty of the flesh outside, or apart from, the great mystery of Godliness. This

is to lose and find our life, and surely and miserably to lose it. "Because I live ye shall live also." "I lay down my life that I may take it again." So did Jesus: so must we.

Immoral Literature.

A people's standard of intelligence and morality is invariably regulated by the standard of their literature. If of a low, trifling, immoral type, such will be the character of the people among whom it circulates. All history, experience, and observation demonstrates this fact. It is to be found in the rise and fall of men and parties, nations and dynasties. Deprive a people of their literature, and they degenerate into barbarism. Limit them to immoral literature, debauchery and crime are sure to overtake them sooner or later.

It costs no more to feed people on sound wisdom, draped in proper language, than it does to surfeit them with cheap romance, adorned in rags and polluted in filth. But it is said that the public taste requires such literature, and the papers would not sell without it. If this be true, it simply proves that the public taste is perverted, and public reform is seriously demanded. The pernicious influence of this standard of literature may not be so readily detected in the adult population as among the youth. In the one case character is formed and habits are fixed, while in the other character is in the process of formation, and habits may be changed or improved. If the family table or library is loaded with indecent literature and sensational trash, it will not be strange if the youth of the country grow up to be desperadoes, and land in the penitentiary or on the gallows. Censure belongs to the parents or guardians who placed such temptations in their way.

There is a prevailing tendency to ignore the wholesome restraints which characterized the culture of children at an earlier period in our history; and the increase of crime in our land is largely attributable to this neglect in the education of children. No feature of domestic discipline should be more scrupulously guarded than that which limits the selection of family literature to such papers and books as produce a sound, healthy, moral, social, and political influence on the youth.—SEL.

Great Men on the Bible.

J. Adams.—The Bible is the best book in the world. Such parts as I cannot reconcile to my philosophy I postpone for future investigation.

J. Q. Adams.—The Bible is the book of all others, to be read at all ages, and in all conditions of human life.

Thomas Carlyle.—All men's book!

John Milton.—God has ordained His Gospel to be a revelation of His power and wisdom in Christ Jesus.

Queen Victoria.—The secret of England's greatness.

The Chevalier Bunsen.—The only cement of nations and hearts.

John McLean.—If its rules were observed, the highest degree of happiness would be attained.

Lewis Cass.—I earnestly hope that, God's day may be hallowed, and His word be studied through this whole land till their obligations are felt and acknowledged by all its people.

Daniel Webster.—I read it through once a year. It is a book for lawyers as well as divines.

Isaac Newton.—Account it the most sublime philosophy.

Coleridge.—I know the Bible is inspired; it finds me at greater depths of my being than any other book.

Tholuch.—We find many dark places in the Bible, because there are many dark places in our hearts.

Bishop Jewel.—Cities fall, empires fade. Where are their books, and what has become of their laws? This book stands unto this day. Amid the wreck of all that is human, without alteration so as to change the doctrine therein—a very singular providence, claiming our attention in the most remarkable manner.

Napoleon Bonaparte.—The gospel is more than a book; it is a living being with an action, a power which invades everything that opposes its extension! Behold! it is upon this table, this book surpassing all others; I never omit to read it, and every day with new pleasure.—Selected by a sister.

Falsehood.

BY A. M. RIDENOUR.

Falsehood is an evil to which the church has ever been exposed. It creates calamity, depravity, envy, strife, injury, crime, vice, sin, and death. Falsehood had its origin with Satan, hence he is called the "father of lies." Lying lips are an abomination to the Lord; "he that speaketh lies shall perish," Prov. 19: 6; speaking lies is hypocrisy, 1 Tim. 4: 2. Hypocrisy consists in acting a part or character not our own; pretending to be what we in reality are not; "making clean the outside of the cup;" having on a robe of righteousness and only practicing formalism.

Falsehood is a crime of a deep dye and of an extensive nature, leading innumerable sin; it is the concealment of all other crimes,—the sheep's clothing upon the wolf's back, the pharisee's own prayer, the hypocrite's paint, the murderer's smile, the thief's cloak, and the Judas' kiss. In short, it is the devil's distinguished characteristic. A man may be guilty of falsehoods without uttering a word; he may act falsehoods as easily as to speak them, for lies may be told in gestures as well as in words. Again a man may be guilty of falsehoods by willfully omitting what ought to be related, therefore the most sacred records of truth may be trampled under foot and man's vain theories made their substitutes. Yet the most common falsehoods are those of the tongue, hence says the Apostle James, "the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity." There is the deceitful tongue, which deals in misrepresentations and falsehoods, there is the vulgar tongue that throws out indecent allusions and finds its element in groveling subjects; there is the inflamed tongue, that busies itself in the propagation of scandal and loves to array friends against each other and keep neighborhoods in commotions, and there is the flattering tongue which would pour into your ear the sweetest strains of applause and would make you think that you are too good for this world. Take heed that your tongue is never devoted to any of these unworthy purposes. If you cherish an habitual impression of the presence of God, and in all that you say endeavor to keep yourself subject to the dictates of an enlightened and wakeful conscience, your tongue will, indeed, be the glory of your frame, and a source of blessing to yourself and others; but if not, take heed lest it should prove a "world of iniquity."—Albright, W. Va.

A Hint.

BY J. G. WINEY.

Recently in returning from Fisher Station preaching appointment, I passed through Grand Rapids, where I encountered a big snow storm that blockaded the railroads, in consequence of which I had to lay over. While I was in the city I observed that everybody swept the snow away from their own doors and sidewalks. "Well," you will say, "this is nothing remarkable." It is not, but my mind was impressed like this. If every church member would look into his own heart and keep it pure and clean, or, in other words, would sweep before his own door, he would not have time to find fault with his brethren and sisters. Some are so very liable to look over the beam in themselves and see a mote (a speck) in their brother's or sister's eye. If everybody would remove the beam first out of his own eye we would not have the divisions in the churches as we now have. Conservatism, Progressive and Old Order would not need to be mentioned, but we could say "all are brethren" in the one faith and practice. I cannot now, nor never could entertain the thought that we must remain three bodies in the Dunkard church. I pray for union and oneness—one body in Christ. May the good Lord grant this our prayer.—Campbell, Mich.

It is always a choice of masters to which Christ is urging men. It is not by striking off all allegiance, but by finding your true Lord, and serving him with a complete submission, that you can escape from slavery. Then give yourself to him completely. Let him mark you as his by whatever marks he will.—Philips Brooks.